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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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HAER No. CA-203

Central Pacific Transcontinental Railroad, Tunnel 27
Southern Pacific Donner Pass Route Tunnels
Milepost 133.9
Applegate vicinity
Placer County
California

For written information regarding Tunnel 27, please refer to Central Pacific Transcontinental Railroad (HAER No. CA-196). Note also that all references to tunnel portals are given in Southern Pacific Railroad terminology. Headquartered in San Francisco, the SP considered all trains heading *away* from San Francisco to be eastbound, all trains heading *toward* San Francisco to be westbound, regardless of actual cardinal direction. Thus a train heading north from Los Angeles to Portland would be westbound until it passed San Francisco, at which time it would become eastbound. Similarly, the railroad referred to all tunnels and other structures along its lines in the same fashion, with tunnels always having west and east portals. Direction of view in the captions will indicate cardinal direction.

Documentation: 3 photographs (1997)

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PHOTOGRAPHS

CA-203-1 West portal of Tunnel 27 in distance, contextual view to northeast looking past Tunnel 26 (HAER CA-202) from atop east portal of Tunnel 25 (HAER CA-201), 380mm lens.

CA-203-2 West portal of Tunnel 27, contextual view from track level east of Tunnel 26 (HAER CA-202), 210mm lens. Note solar panel providing signal power, evidence of continuing updating of technology by the railroad. Single-light searchlight-type signal was typical system-wide on the Southern Pacific prior to the 1980s merger with the Denver & Rio Grande Western.

CA-203-3 East portal of Tunnel 27, view to northeast from atop cut bank, 210mm lens. This view shows to good effect the original construction of the Harriman period tunnels, which were concreted fifty feet in from the portals with the balance being timber lined. In 1965 the east end of the tunnel collapsed, with the result that approximately 115 feet of the east end was "daylighted" and the original east portal and concreted end were left in place, free-standing as seen here.